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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name J. Biddle Tenant House

other names/site number Delaware Survey # N-5064

2. Location

street & number 1126 Church Road not for publication ☐

city or town Bear vicinity ☒

state Delaware code DE county New Castle code 003

zip code 19701

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☐ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☐ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

☐ entered in the National Register ☐

☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the National Register ☐

☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register ☐

☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ removed from the National Register ☐

☐ other (explain): ☐

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 buildings
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

NA

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: Single Dwelling
Domestic Secondary Structure

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: Single Dwelling
Domestic Secondary Structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Federal

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick
roof Asphalt Shingle
walls Asbestos Siding

other wood

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☐ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or a grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture & Social History

Period of Significance: NA

Significant Dates: NA

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation _____

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

☐ previously listed in the National Register

☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register

☐ designated a National Historic Landmark

☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

☒ State Historic Preservation Office

☐ Other State agency

☐ Federal agency

☐ Local government

☐ University

☐ Other

Name of repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 2 Acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

1 18 441700 4385300 3 _____

2 _____ 4 _____

☒ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Stephen G. Del Sordo(Arch. Hist) & Diane Puleo (Historian)

organization MAAR Associates date July 2000

street & number P.O. Box 655 telephone 302-368-5777

city or town Newark state DE zip code 19715

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps: A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs: Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

Name _____

Street & Number _____ Telephone _____

City or Town _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement. This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.)

Estimated Burden Statement. Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127, and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1 J. Biddle Tenant House
name of property
New Castle County, Delaware
county and State

The J. Biddle Tenant House is a three-bay, side-passage, two-story frame building on a brick foundation. The building was built during the middle of the nineteenth century as a tenant house. The exterior is covered with flat-edge asbestos siding. That material was applied over brick-pattern asphalt paper which, in turn, covers weatherboard siding. The weatherboard siding is in two patterns. The first is a late nineteenth-century German or novelty siding and the second is a flat weatherboard siding. The brick foundation has been parged with cement and the bond of the brick is not visible.

The windows are a combination of 1 over 1 double-hung sash and 2 over 2 double-hung sash. The windows have plain wood surrounds. The modern wood door also has a plain wood surround. The only windows that are ornamented are the gable end windows and a window on the rear porch. These windows have arched wood lintels.

The gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles. It is unclear what the original roofing material might have been for this building. The roof has a box cornice. There is a single interior-gable end chimney set just before the ridge line of the house.

There is a full porch on the front of the building of which two-thirds has been enclosed to provide additional living space. There is a full porch across the side of the building. Both porches have poured-concrete floors and modern replacement posts.

There is a one-story, shed-roofed addition on the rear of the building. This addition has a cinder-block foundation.

Behind the house, there is a single-story, cinder-block storage building or workshop. It has a flat roof. There are no other buildings on the property.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 1 J. Biddle Tenant House
name of property
New Castle County, Delaware
county and State

The J. Biddle Tenant House at 1126 Church Road is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places because of recent interior and exterior alterations that reduce the integrity of the building. In addition, the associated agricultural buildings have been removed from the property.

The Biddle family was the primary owner of the property until the end of the first quarter of the twentieth century. In 1854, Stephen Biddle died intestate; he left behind his wife and four children – John, James, Thomas, and Araminda (who was married to Edward Downey). In 1895, after their mother died, John Biddle petitioned the Orphans Court to allow him to purchase his siblings' share of the property. After determining the property could not be partitioned, the Court ordered the sale of the property at a public auction. The auction was held in the City of New Castle, at which John Biddle was the "highest and best bidder" – he purchased the 125-acre property for \$3,121.23 (New Castle Co. OC M:2). "J. Biddle" is noted as the owner of the property on 1868 and 1881 maps.

The area surrounding the Biddle's farm was predominantly rural. Scharf's *History of Delaware* notes that much of fertile soil of New Castle Hundred was under cultivation at the time, and that "outside of the pursuits connected with agriculture, there are but few interests which engage the attention of the people of New Castle Hundred" (Scharf 1888: 852). The 1880 Agricultural Census of Delaware noted that John Biddle rented (for a share of the products) a farm consisting of one hundred and sixty acres of tilled or improved land, and fifteen acres of woodland. Like the majority of farms in New Castle Hundred, the primary crops grown on John Biddle's farm were Indian corn, oats, wheat, potatoes, and hay. The farm also produced a large amount of butter. Deborah Biddle, perhaps the widow of Stephen Biddle, was the entry prior to John Biddle in the 1880 Agricultural Census of Delaware. She was noted as the owner of a farm consisting of one hundred acres of tilled or improved land, and twenty-five acres of woodland or forest, which produced similar crops to John Biddle's. Perhaps John Biddle expanded the operation of his mother's farm by renting acreage on an adjoining farm. According to research done on agricultural tenancy in Delaware, it was not unusual for a tenant to occupy more than one piece of land in order to maximize crop yields and profit (Siders et al.: 3).

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 2 J. Biddle Tenant House
name of property
New Castle County, Delaware
county and State

The Biddle family owned the property until 1924, when Clarence and Hannah Gray (Hannah Gray was John Biddle's daughter) sold the 125-acre farm to Eugene Cleaver, of St. Georges Hundred (New Castle Co. Deed Book Z:32). The Cleaver's owned the property until 1932, after which the property changed hands several times. Harvey and Estella Jewell purchased the property in 1938 (New Castle Co. DB F:41) and are responsible for the current 119.87-acre configuration of the property. Around 1949, they built themselves a new home on five acres of the property, and sold the remaining acreage to the Haines in 1950 (New Castle CO. Deed Book Y:49). They gave their daughter, Helen Astolfi-Webber, half an acre out of their 5-acre property to build a home next door. Ms. Astolfi-Webber sold her half-acre property when her parents moved to South Carolina and purchased their 5-acre property. She continues to live there and provided valuable insight into the recent history of the property.

Ms. Astolfi-Webber's parents operated the farm until 1950 when they sold it to the Haines. They grew staple crops, such as corn, wheat, and hay, in order to support their dairy farm, from which they sold milk. Ms. Astolfi-Webber recalled a large barn on the property, corncribs, and a large storage shed for hay. Streams ran through the property prior to its development, and a "Carolina" - apparently a rare type of spring-fed pond that is perfectly round and very shallow - was located in one of the fields. Ms. Astolfi-Webber recalled that the dwelling had German siding (now covered by asbestos shingle), and that a bay, located in the northwest facade, was later removed by the Haines. The interior had an open stair with a turned newel post.

The current tenants have resided on the property for approximately thirty years, and are responsible for partially enclosing the porch, changing the interior layout, and enclosing the stair. The owner, Old Coach Corporation, acquired the property in 1972 from Anderson-Stokes Mobile Homes, Inc., who was responsible for the partial development of the property into a Mobile Home Park, named Waterford (New Castle Co. Deed Book W-85).

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 1 J.Biddle Tenant Farm
name of property
New Castle County, Delaware
county and State

REFERENCES CITED

- Scharf, J. Thomas
1888 *History of Delaware, 1609-1888*. L. J. Richards, Philadelphia, PA. Two Volumes.
- Siders et al.
1987 *Agricultural Tenancy in Central Delaware, 1770-1900+/-: A Historic Context*. Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering, College of Urban Affairs and Public Policy, University of Delaware, Newark, DE.
- Maps Consulted:
- Beers
1868 *Atlas of the State of Delaware, Map of New Castle Hundred*. Pomeroy and Beers, Philadelphia.
- Hopkins, G. M.
1881 *Atlas of New Castle County, Delaware*.
- Rea, Samuel and Jacob Price
1849 *Map of New Castle County, Delaware from Original Surveys*. Smith and Wister, Philadelphia.
- USGS
1953 *St. Georges Quadrangle*
1993 *St. Georges Quadrangle*

Sources Consulted:

City-County Building, Recorder of Deeds Office
Title Transfers:
S-20-250
Q-20-465
G-22-154
K-24-32
K-24-34

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 2 J. Biddle Tenant Farm
name of property
New Castle County, Delaware
county and State

Z-32-176
D-36-211
D-36-213
D-36-483
D-36-485
F-38-520
N-38-435
Y-38-98
F-41-526
Y-49-44
V-73-282
Z-79-485
H-83-763
P-83-884
P-83-882
W-85-437

City-County Building, Recorder of Wills Office
Wills:
D-3-328

Delaware State Archives, Dover, DE
Orphans Court Record M-2-293

U.S. Bureau of the Census
1870 *Delaware Agricultural Census, New Castle Hundred*
1880 *Delaware Agricultural Census, New Castle Hundred*

Oral Interview
Helen Astolfi-Webber. (daughter of Harvey and Estella Jewell)
1166 Church Road, Bear, DE 19701

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 10 Page 1 J.Biddle Tenant House
name of property
New Castle County, Delaware
county and State

The bounds for the survey and evaluation of the J. Biddle Tenant House are an arbitrary square that encloses two acres around the house and the modern outbuilding behind the house. This property is part of a larger tract of land that has been suggested for development for a number of years and that already includes a mobile-home park on part of the tract. The two-acre square was chosen as a boundary for study because it includes the house and outbuilding. At one time, there were a number of agricultural buildings associated with this property: including at least one large barn. It is unclear where these former buildings were located. Therefore, this suggested two-acre boundary is only designed to provide a study area around the house and outbuilding.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

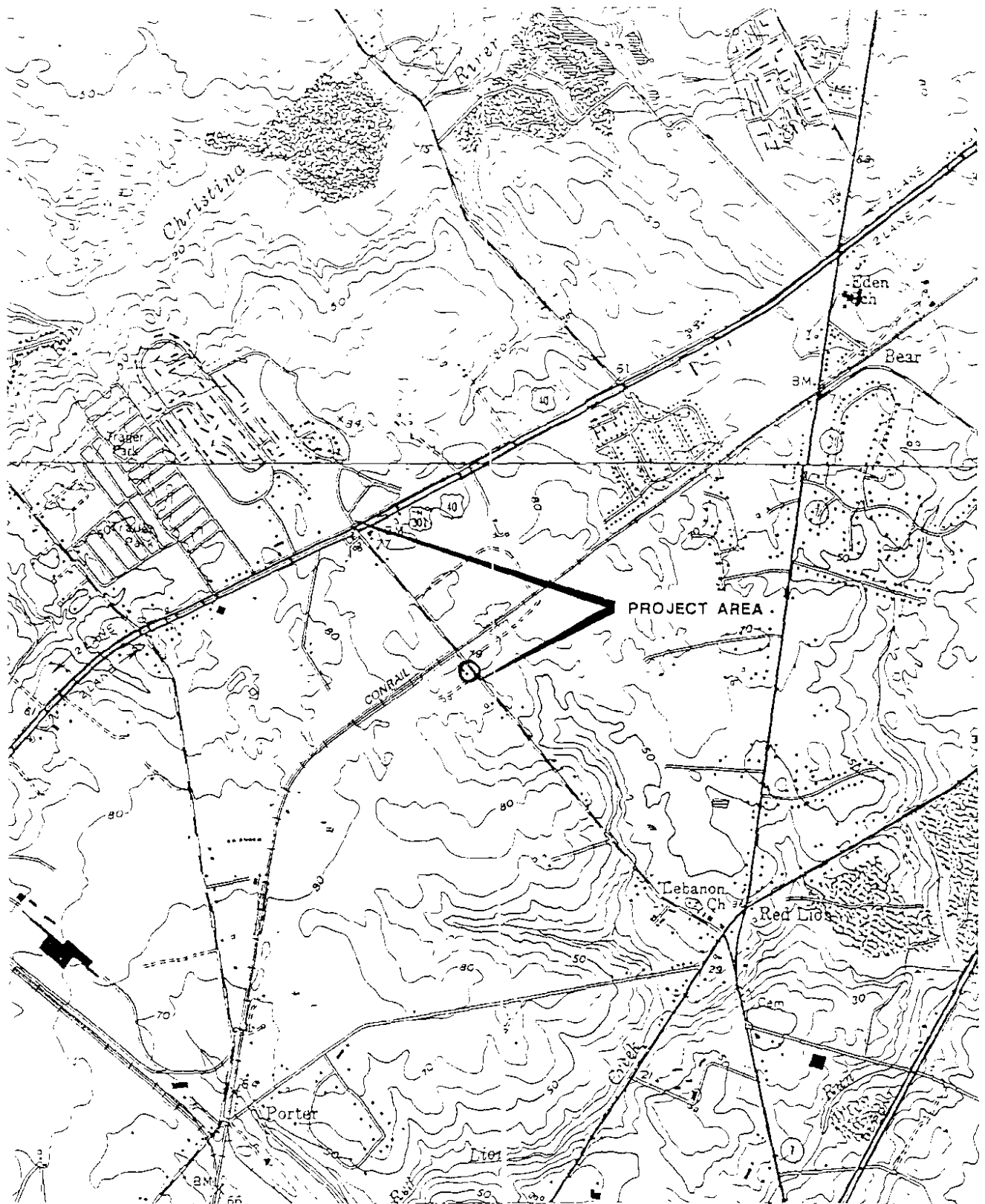
Section _____ Page 1 J. Biddle Tenant House
name of property
Additional Documentation New Castle County, Delaware
county and State

Photo Information

The following information applies to all photographs:

1. Name of Property: J. Biddle Tenant House
2. County and State: New Castle County, Delaware
3. Name of Photographer: Stephen DelSordo
4. Date of Photograph: 6/12/00
5. Location of Negatives: Delaware HPO

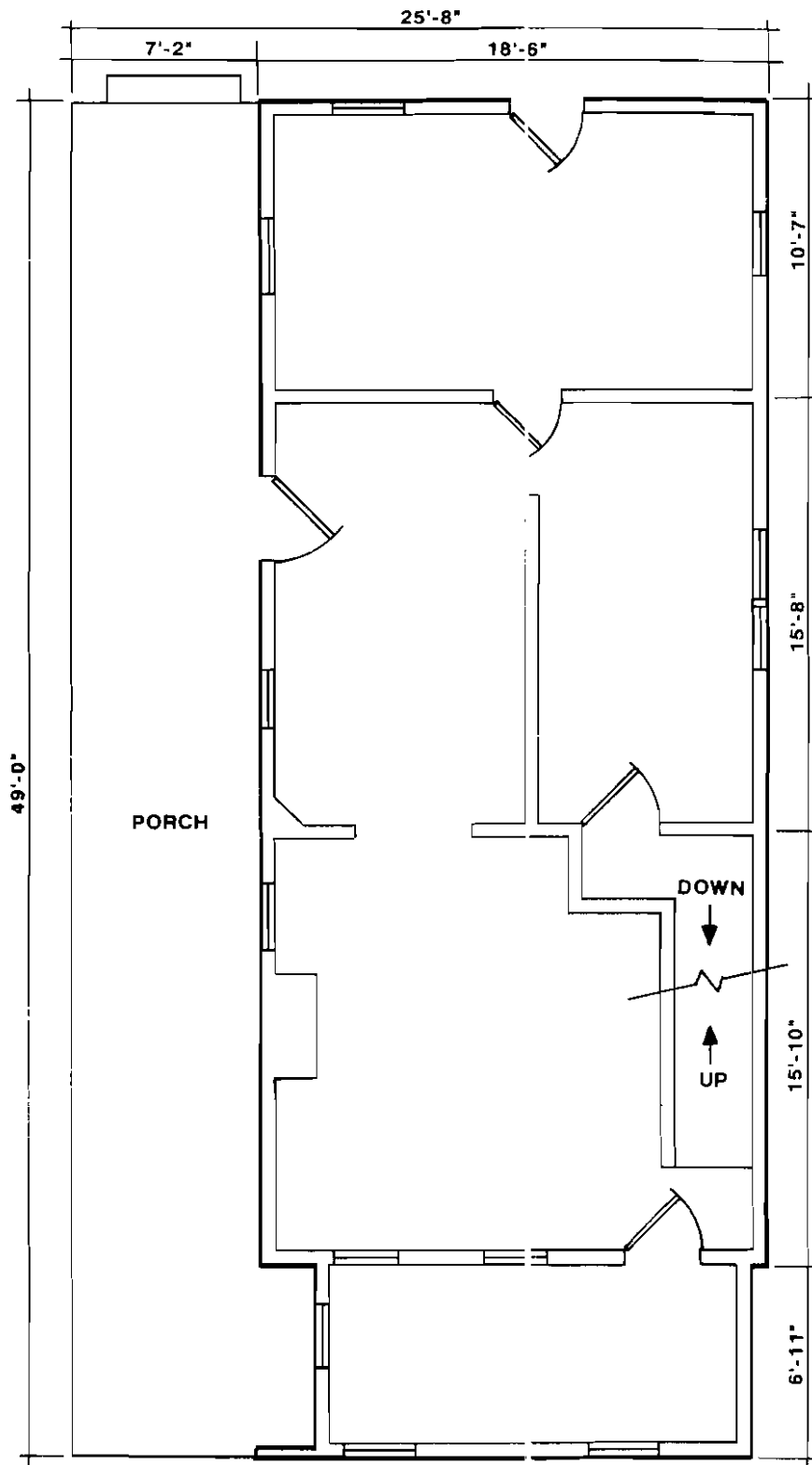
- PLATE 1: View of South Facade, Facing Northeast
- PLATE 2: Northwest View of Property, Facing Southeast
- PLATE 3: Northeast view of Property, Facing Southwest
- PLATE 4: Southeast View of House, Facing Northwest
- PLATE 5: View of North Wall in Living Room, Showing Enclosed Stair, Facing North
- PLATE 6: View of East Wall in Living Room, Showing Entry and Openings, Facing East
- PLATE 7: View of Dining Room, Showing Porch Entry, Taken from Living Room, Facing West
- PLATE 8: View of Area Behind House, Facing Southwest



SOURCE: USGS NEWARK EAST & ST. GEORGES,
DEL. QUADRANGLES, 1953, 1985



J. Biddle Tenant House
N-5064
New Castle County, DE
UTM 18 441700 4385300



J. BIDDLE TENANT FARM (N-5064)
1126 CHURCH ROAD
NEW CASTLE COUNTY, DELAWARE
FIRST FLOOR PLAN
 DRAWN BY RICHARD L. GREEN

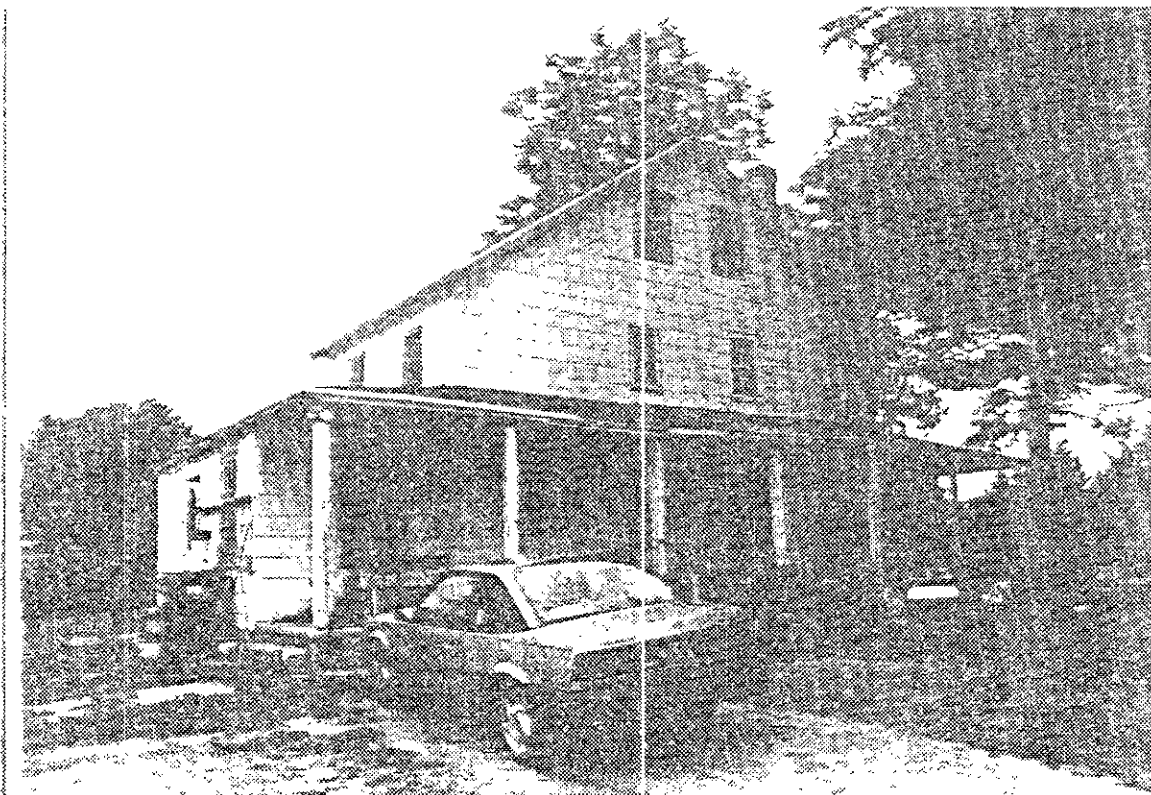


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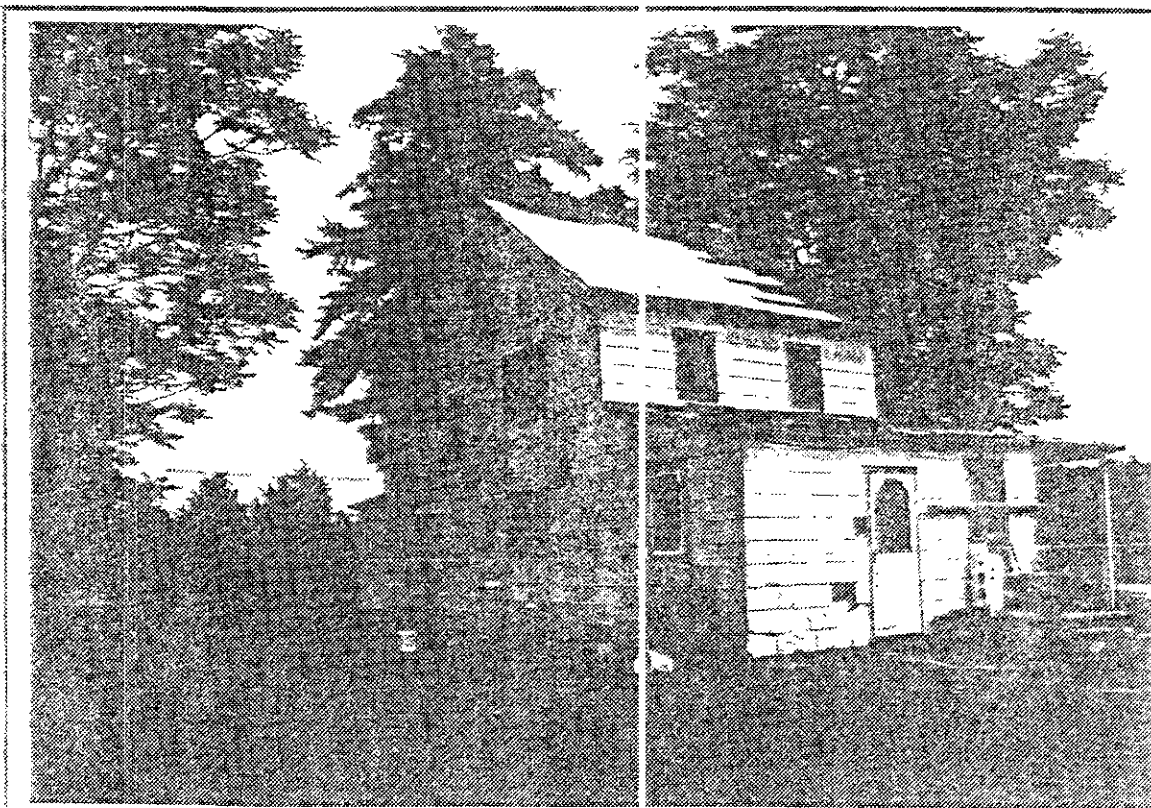


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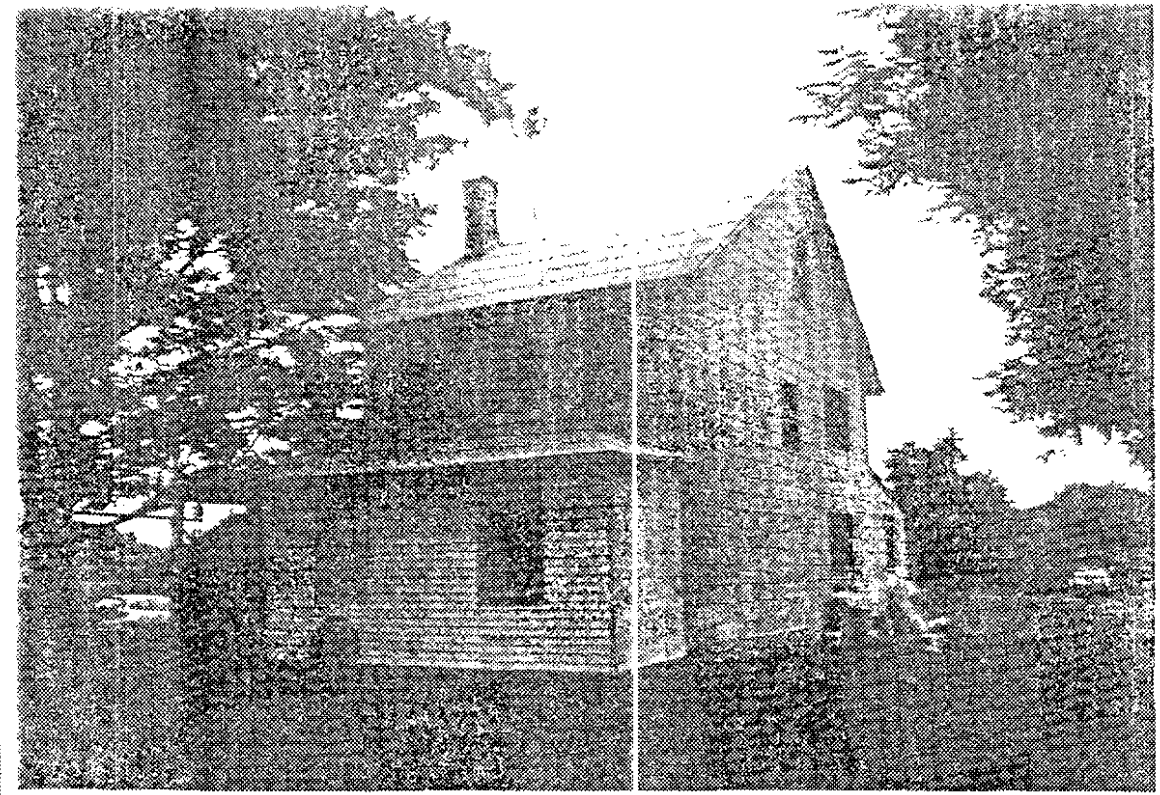


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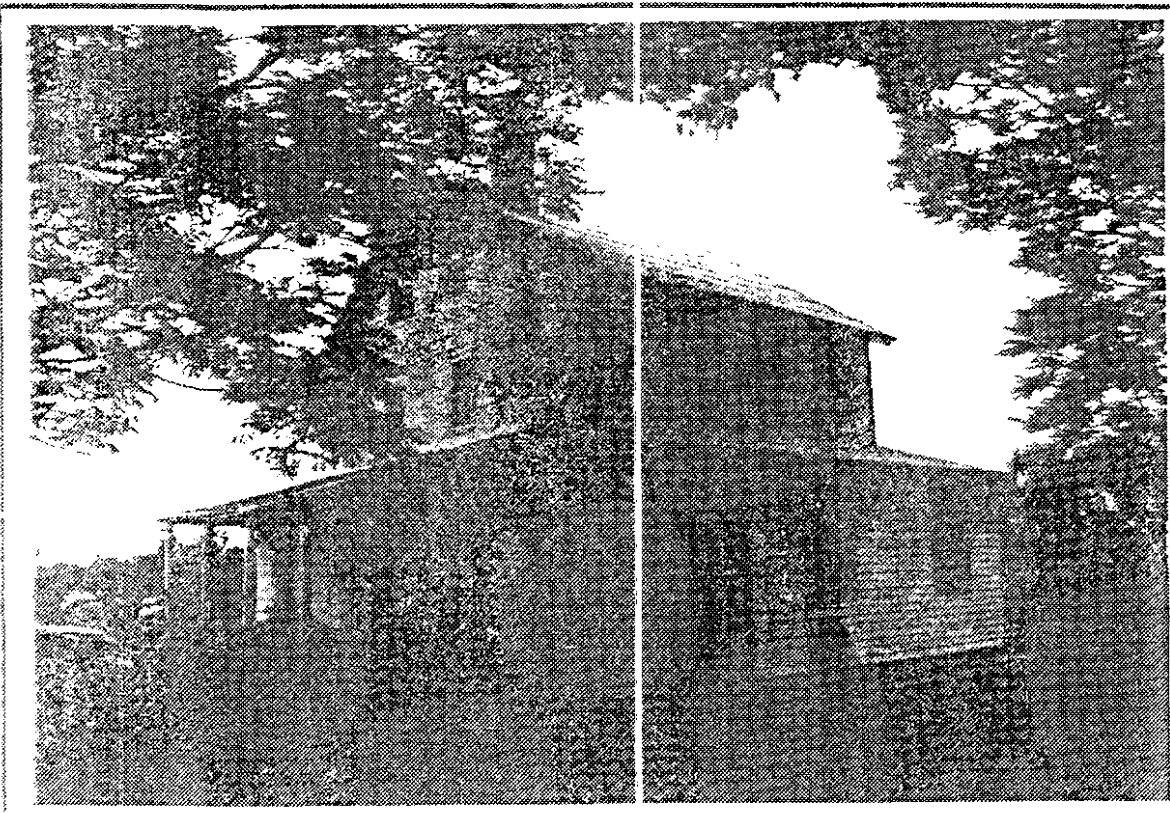


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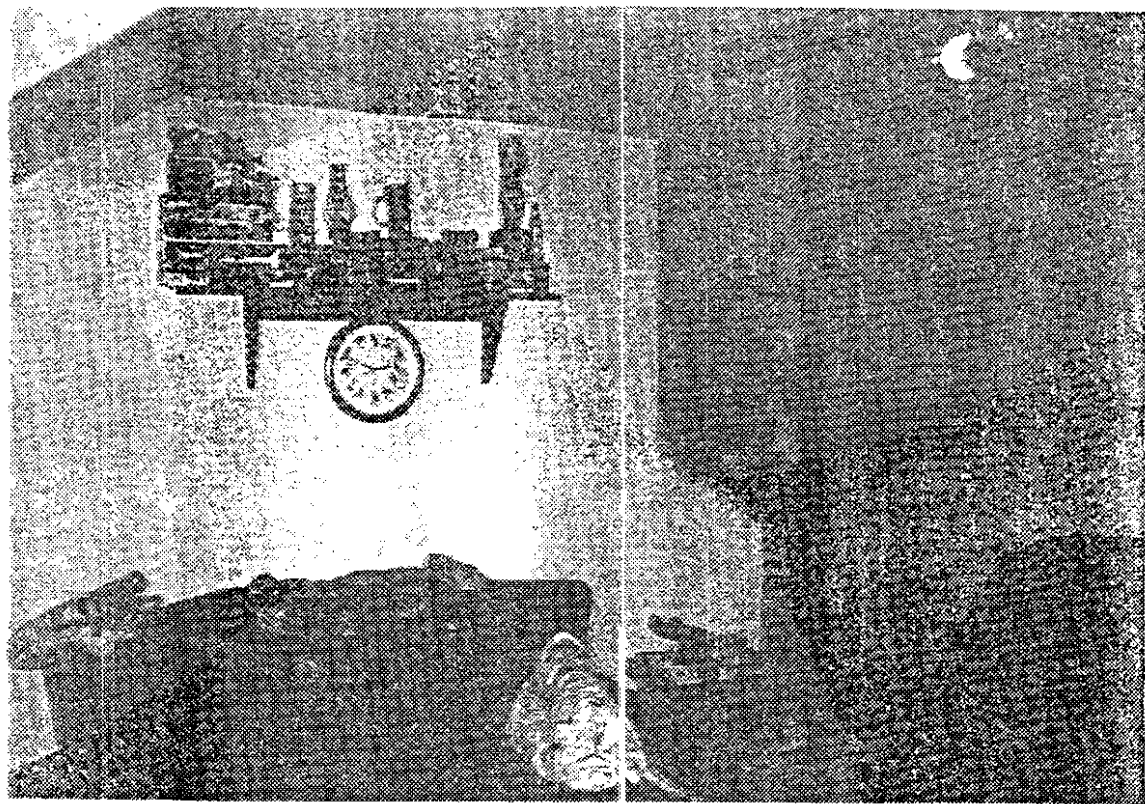


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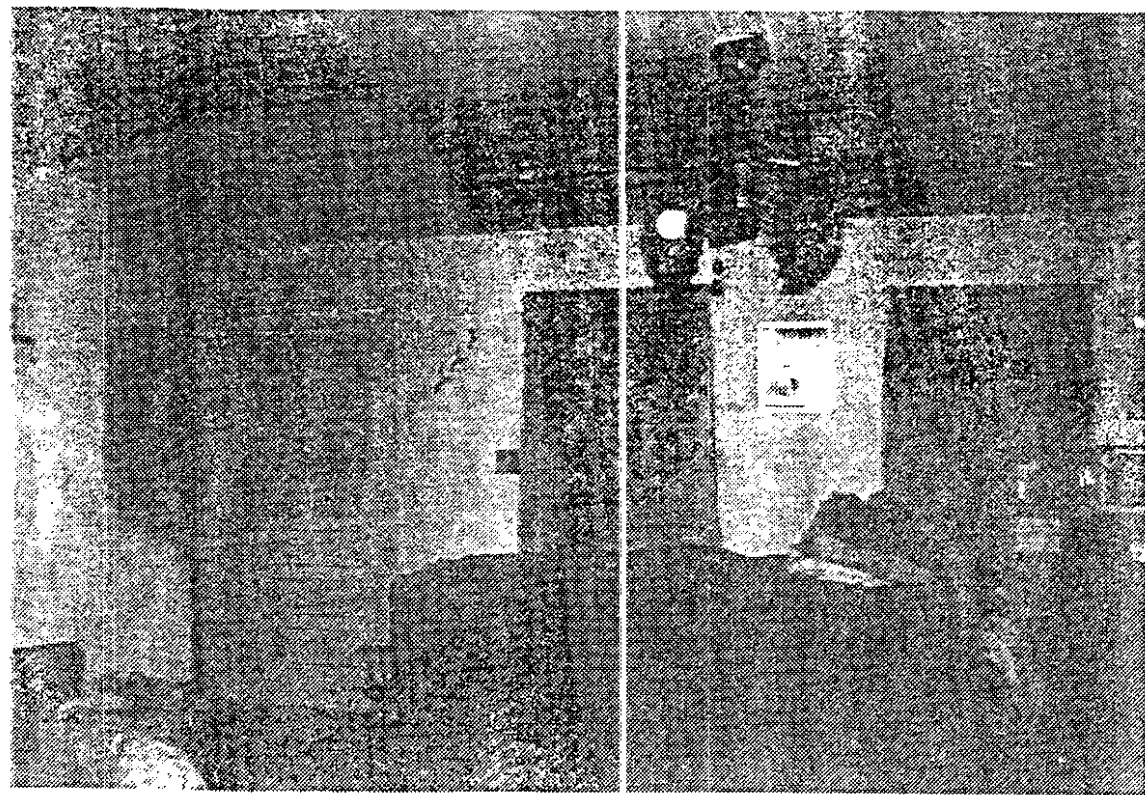


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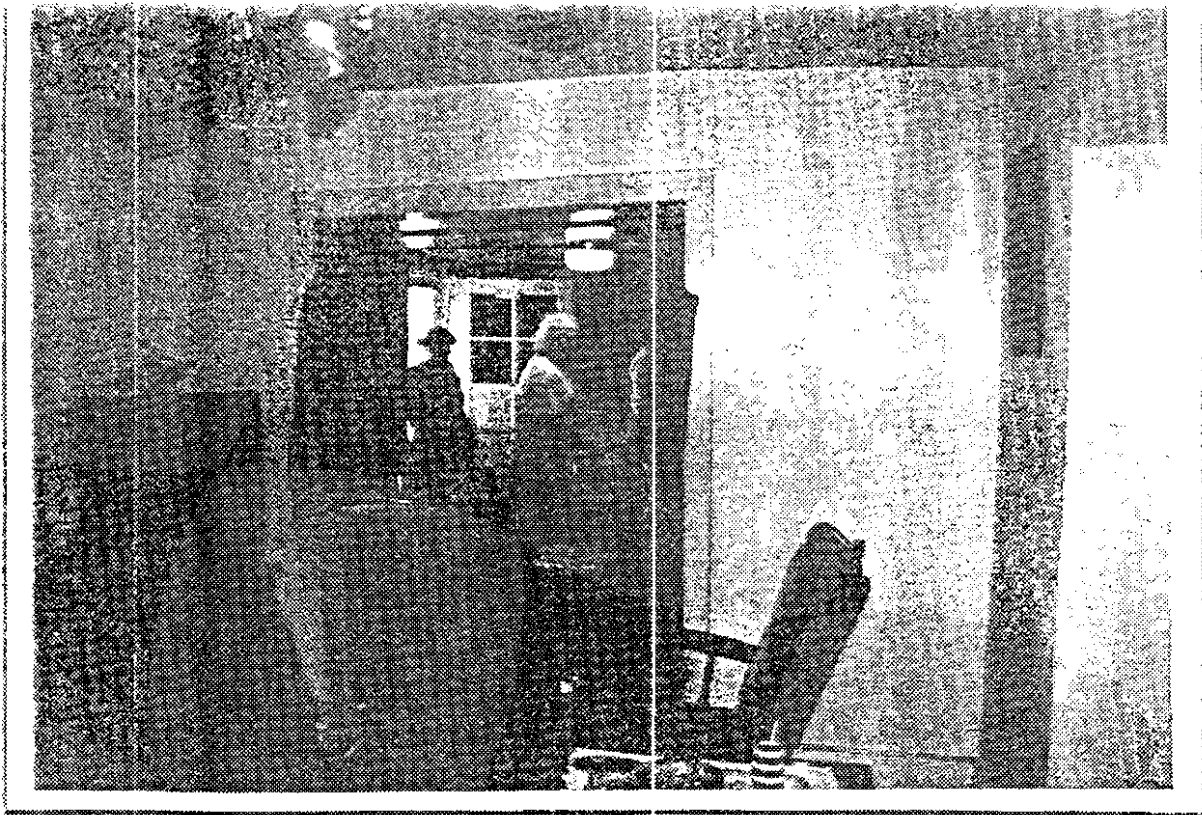


PLATE 7

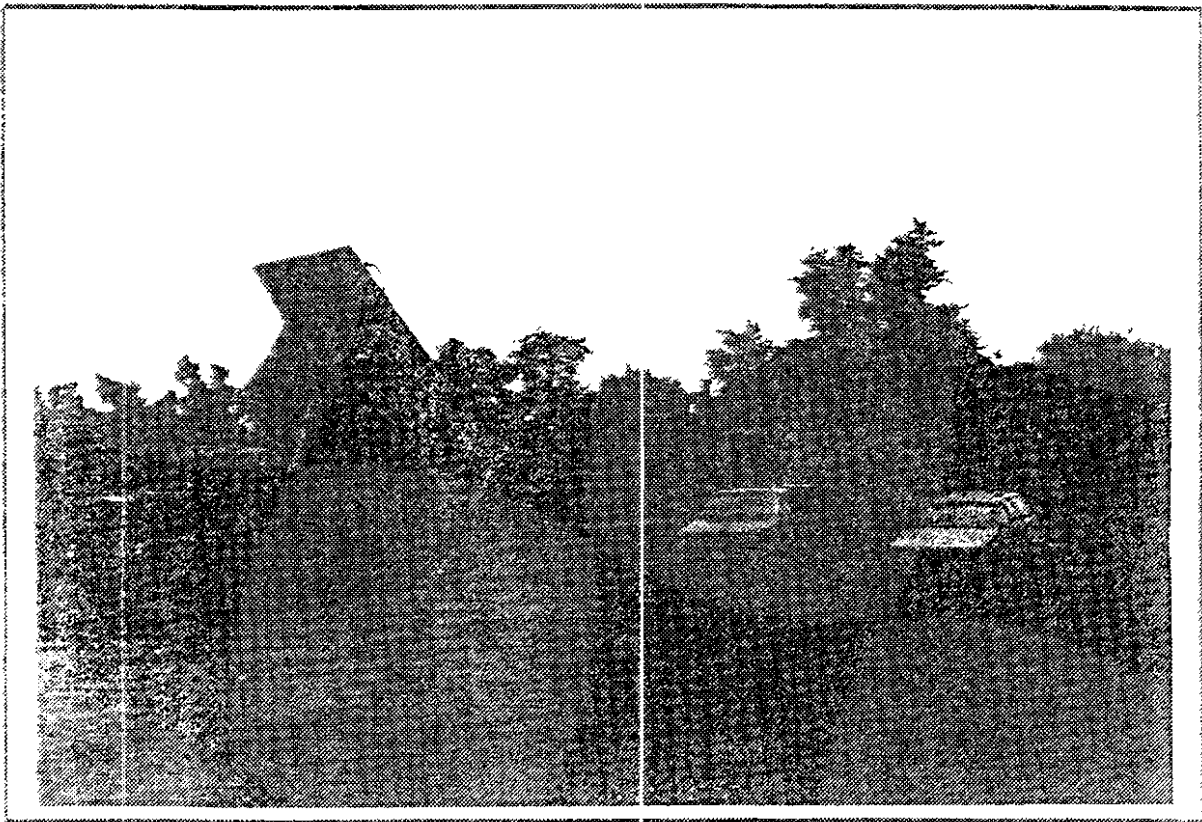


PLATE 8